



- Client:** Road Safety Department, Hackney Council
- Project:** Hackney Council invite their contractor VolkerHighways to take part in a dynamic HGV Cycle Awareness session
- Aims:** To increase VolkerHighways HGV drivers awareness and understanding of cycling in a 3.5 hour session. In addition, to develop a practical cycle training module that can be used in Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) training
- Results:** Initially negative view of cyclists and cycling changed as the session progressed. Combining on-road practical alongside the theory was impactful and delivered very good outcomes in a short time span.

Background:

Cycle Training UK (CTUK) and Hackney Council have developed a short dynamic cycle awareness session for professional and HGV drivers. The course was developed as there was a need for a cycle awareness programme that could be incorporated into HGV drivers Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC). CPC was designed to improve the knowledge and skills of professional LGV and PCV drivers. There is a legal requirement to take 35 hours of training every 5 years. CTUK and the Road Safety Department of Hackney Council felt that cycle awareness training would work as a module within CPC. CTUK has had extensive experience in delivering HGV Cycle Awareness programmes and working with Hackney Council delivering their individual cycle training. This particular programme incorporates very active content where theory is delivered during practical drills and outcomes recorded.

“The aim of the training was to incorporate an element of cycle training and awareness into the CPC driver training scheme which is provided through FORS (Freight Operators Recognition scheme). We wanted the drivers to get a realistic feeling of what it is like to cycle on the main road and in particular we wanted them to experience the appreciation of each other’s road space.” [Mark Mascar Project Manager, VolkerHighways](#)

‘I will be more patient in future and appreciate how a small pot hole can make a big problem for a cyclist but not for a truck’
[VolkerHighways Driver](#)



‘We got amazing outcomes from these drivers, some of whom were initially really negative towards cyclists. Now they are keen to get their own 1:1 cycle training lessons! We are really pleased with the pilot and I believe that it will complement other CPC modules’ David Dansky, Instructor, Cycle Training UK

The training:

In previous HGV Awareness sessions CTUK delivered a classroom session and then on road training. For this session following a brief introduction and assessment of drivers’ understanding and attitude to cyclists, the participants went quickly to practical on bike training session which incorporated cycle theory. After the control skills session the drivers went on road - using Barclays Hire bikes. They learnt about cyclist road positioning by covering some key outcomes from the Bikeability syllabus including an exploration of a rider’s road position - riding a car doors width away from parked cars and away from junctions. The drivers came to appreciate why some cyclists seem to ride away from the kerb where they are more visible as well as understanding that less assertive riders weave in and out of gaps because of their perception of fear. (A driver pointed out that the noise of a vehicle behind him made him want to duck out the way even if doing so put him in a less visible, more risky position.)

Experiencing the road from a cyclist’s perspective delivered amazing outcomes and real understanding. One VolkerHighways’ trainee cyclist commented after the control skills session that he empathises with cyclists more on the effort and skill they need to have, while an other trainee talked about the size and effect of potholes on riders and how that impacts on the way the cyclist rides.

‘The impact that the practical training had on the HGV drivers was astounding!’

They left the training with a much greater empathy with cyclists having had the opportunity to cycle on the road with vehicles similar to the ones they drive themselves at work. Some drivers now want to purchase their own bikes and plan to increase their own cycling for leisure and transport. Hackney Council is looking to incorporate CTUK’s training module into the Certificate of Professional Competence for all its HGV drivers and hopes to encourage haulier companies that use the local road network to do the same. This training is going to help Hackney Council address the very serious road safety issues of HGV and cyclist interactions that are currently very high on our agenda.’ **Lucy Nandris, Cycle Training Manager, Hackney Council**

Most of the drivers had not been on a cycle in many years and were at first, very apprehensive and negative towards cycling in general. When asked what they thought of cyclists before going out of the classroom, there was a feeling of dislike and hostility towards cyclists.

Three hours later and a few stiff legs, the drivers perception and feelings had been changed dramatically. We saw a real transformation. Some of them even signed up for cycle training and at least one of them is going to look into the cycle to work scheme.

Here are a few of their comments about the training session:

‘We have a mutual respect of sharing road space with cyclists’ ‘Now I know why cyclists take up different positions in the road’ ‘I understand cyclist body language now and why they look back and make eye contact with me’

A real success story and we are proud to be working with Cycle Training UK. 95% of the Hackney VolkerHighways team have received training from you and now enjoy the benefits of using a cycle to manage the network of Hackney’s roads’ **Mark Mascar Project Manager, VolkerHighways**

